

The Merchants House, Carlinghow, Batley

Heritage Statement in Support of a Listed Building Consent Application for Repairs and Restorations



Introduction

This document presents a Heritage Statement that pertains to a proposal for repairing and restoring The Merchants House, a dwelling with a potential age dating back to the early 17th century. The purpose of this statement is to comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) and the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure in England) Order 2013, as well as relevant local plan policies.

The Merchants House is a designated heritage asset listed on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and categorized as a Grade II building due to its exceptional architectural and historical importance (List Entry Number 1313680). Because the proposed repairs will impact a designated heritage asset, this Heritage Statement includes a heritage impact assessment. The assessment aims to determine the significance of The Merchants House as a heritage asset, the potential effects of the proposed repairs on its identified significance, and the rationale for the proposed

repairs, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Site Location and Historical Background

The Merchants House is located at the intersection of South Bank Road and Carlinghow Lane in the Parish of Batley and Liversedge and is centred on the National Grid Reference SE 23266 24800. Almost at the bottom of the hill slope the house is bounded to the north by Carlinghow Lane, to the east by South Bank Road, to the south by a 1960s house and to the west by a Victorian terrace. The house sits in approximately 900m² of fenced-off mature garden.

Historical Background and Description of the Building

The location of The Merchants House is in Carlinghow, a district situated to the west of Batley. The name Carlinghow is believed to have originated from the Old Norse term for "Old woman/crone *hougr*" (ON for hill/knoll/mound) and has historically been referred to as "Carlinghowe" and "Kerlinghow(e)". The district developed around a natural rocky outcrop known as The Outies.¹

Although the Domesday Book does not directly reference Carlinghow, it is categorized as a "dispersed" settlement typology consisting of small clusters of farms scattered across the countryside and small groups of homesteads or hamlets. These settlements were typically located along the edges of commons and greens and at the intersections of roads and tracks.² The majority of these settlements were established by the 12th century and were occupied by small-scale farming families, with some serving special functions as appendages of larger estates managed on behalf of manorial lords.

Carlinghow was likely one of these hamlets, serving as a small manor within the Batley township. Hugh de Eland is described in the Domesday Book as holding 2 bovates in Carlinghow and Batley, with Carlinghow Old Hall (PRN 5085) serving as the manorial seat. The Eland family owned the Old Hall until the 1500s, after which it was demolished in 1968.

Situated 150 meters south-west of the original location of Carlinghow Old Hall and 800 meters east of the Outies is The Merchants House.

The building was formerly listed as 15 and 17 South Bank Road in 1963 and is a detached, L-shaped stone house. The south-facing main range consists of two cells, with the western cell featuring a low aisle or outshut at the rear. Additionally, a two-

¹ A. H. Smith, *The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire*, 1961:180

² S. Wrathmell, *West Yorkshire Research Agenda: Medieval Rural Settlement in West Yorkshire*, 2018:3

storey rear wing extends off to the north at the east end of the building (refer to Figure 1). Although listed as early 18th century, the building presents the characteristics of a late medieval/early modern yeoman aisled house (Plate 1).

This typology was typical of the vernacular architecture of West Yorkshire with ‘the greatest concentration ...found in the Pennine west of the country, especially in the Upper Calder Valley...’.³

The main front of the building is to the south. Here there are splayed mullioned windows (Plate 2) lighting a parlour, hall and fire-area, with a continuous drip mould over them.

The main original door of the house is in the east gable (Plate 3): it has a broad-chamfered surround and a shallow arched Tudor head.

The doors at the side and at the rear appeared to be later alterations.

The masonry of the building is coursed rubble stone with quoins at all the angles save one.

The entrance opens into what was the original the hall (now the kitchen) alongside the main gable fireplace. This fireplace (of 18th-century origin with a brick stack and a square stone surround) replaces an original firehood, the existence of which is demonstrated by the survival of the fire-window and the breaking of the spine beam about 6’ from the end wall. The hall has chamfered joists with niched stops.

The parlour (today a living room) lies to the west of the hall, it has stopped chamfered beams and joists and it is heated by a stack on the gable wall (Plate 4).

The fireplace has a shallow-arched head and a broad-chamfered square surround.

To the right of the fireplace, there is an original salt/spice-cellar (Plate 5).

The internal division between hall and parlour and between front and rear of the house seems to have been of timber originally.

The rear wing, at the east end of the house (Plate 6), was very likely entered from the hall by means of a door near the main gable opening. The wing has a single room with probably a service function originally. This room also had a firehood as demonstrated by the break of the spine beam some 6’ from the end wall and the

³ RCHM/WYMCC, Rural Houses of West Yorkshire 1400-1830, 1986:27

existence of a fire-window in the west wall of the wing. A later door was opened in the north wall of this wing causing the loss of details of the original cooking arrangements.

To the west of this possible kitchen/service room is the single-storey aisle. Originally, it probably acted as an unheated storage area. Today, three doors open into this room: a door into a space under the stairs to the second floor; a door into the later 18th-century cellar and a door into the later 18th-century outshut. The doors to the cellar and to the space under the stairs present late medieval/early modern characteristics.

Regarding the original position of the stair to the second floor, the joists preclude a site in the original hall and parlour. If sited in the original kitchen/service room, the stair must have been on the site of the existing flight, for the joist are otherwise all complete. The original kitchen and aisle seem to be the only possible sites for the stair, and, given the low nature of the aisle, probability favours the kitchen/service room as the site.

The outshut, built in a later phase in the west elevation (Plate 7), has the characteristics of an additional service room which was possibly a shop chamber typical of yeomen/clothiers'.⁴

The roof cover is composed of thick (between 30mm and 50mm) stone slates throughout.

During restorations in the 1970s, a plaster panel was found over the fireplace of the parlour (Plate 8). The panel shows a coat of arms with a decorative surround and the date 1636. The arms have crossed swords on a plane field. The panel was painted (Plate 9) after 1979 but before 2005. It is not certain whether the panel belongs in the parlour and the arms have not been traced yet, but the suggested date is quite acceptable for the typology of the house.

Whether the arms indicate that the house was built and occupied by someone of gentle status or pretension is not known.

The site and detail of the house suggest that it was the residence rather of a prosperous yeoman or clothier than a gentleman, as the name of the property would suggest.

⁴ RCHM/WYMCC 1986:153

The house was first listed on the 29th of March 1963 with an amendment on the 13th of January 1984.

Requirements of the Brief

The full Conservation Engineer's Report, written in 2020 and listing the brief details, was sent directly to Senior Conservation Officer Sue Oakley.

The preliminary report presented by the initial engineering team did not concur with our established principles regarding the repair approach for this building, as it suggested the removal of the entire roofing. Such a proposal is not permissible given the historical significance of the building. Consequently, we are collaborating with an architect who has specialised expertise in the preservation and renovation of timber frame structures. To further strengthen our approach, a conservation-accredited structural engineer, whose philosophy is more congruent with the objectives of this project, will supplement the architect's contributions. The focus of this collaborative endeavour is on preserving and retaining the building's historic fabric.

The repair works are to provide a watertight (there are 4 visible, active leaks in the building, 3 of them substantial), damp free and breathable environment for the building, to minimise the causes of distress, specifically eave-spread, to the original structure and to restore the structural integrity of the building.

Scope of the works:

1. Re-roofing

Carefully remove all the stone ridge and stone slates placing all stones at ground level for sorting, re-dressing and holing. All stone ridges will be cleaned of all mortar and stored safely on site. Stand the stones in length order ready for re-slating store safely on site. Place all debris into a skip for clearance from the site.

Supply and prepare all second-hand stone slates to match existing ones and to be used on the rear elevations. If the odd stones are needed for the prominent elevation to make up a shortfall, we will make sure they lay and use the appropriate thickness of slate.

Carry out a marking stick for each elevation based on the amount of stone slate lengths available.

Lay the stone slates with 1 No copper nail into a 50mm x 25mm batten fixed which is fixed with 65mm x 3.35mm galvanized nails over a permeable membrane. All stone

slates to be the same length per course diminishing from the eave to the ridge. All stone to be spot head bedded with an air lime mortar.

All stone slates to be dressed using hand tools following the valley line. The same process for the verges and abutments.

New lead work to all valleys using code 6 sand cast lead measured and ordered to length and width required.

All flashing to abutments, front aprons and back gutters to be code 6 sand cast lead measured and ordered to the length and width required.

Lead soakers to be code 4 milled lead and cut to the required length depending on the stone slate length.

Re-bed all stone slates to verges with air lime mortar with pozzolan pointing to agreed finish.

All mortar joints to be pointed with air lime mortars.

Re-bed all stone ridges with air lime mortar back bedding along the tail of the wing of the ridge and pointed on the butt joint with the ridges being pressed tight the next ridge.

Once the stone roof works are completed place all debris into the skip ready for clearance from site. All good stone slates to be stored on-site.

Check all existing cast iron guttering and downpipes renewing any damaged cast iron with matching style and size. Check all gutters for correct flow and downpipes for any debris cleaning as necessary. Decorate the cast in situ if not being removed from the building.

2. Structural repairs and improvements to the timber frame

We will execute structural repairs broadly in line with the following stipulations. However, considering the inherent complexity of the project, it is anticipated that we may uncover additional hidden defects. Should such circumstances arise necessitating further repair work, the conservation officer will be promptly informed and invited for an on-site inspection.

2.1 North wing roof

We will look to see if we can support the existing purlin through the use of a steel plate in partnership with the engineer, we do not want to replace the roof members unless we have to, given the potential for their early date, however as worst case scenario, we will look at partnering the failed purlin on the east slope with a new Class D30 oak member, minimum size of 200x150.

The existing common rafters, where required will be sistered with new softwood timbers side-by-side with failed common rafters.

Re-roof as above

2.2 Main Roof

Where we have seen failure in the roof, we will look to sister the existing rafter rather than replace what we see, installing a new softwood common rafters side-by-side with the failed existing common rafter towards the east end. This provides a clear and honest intervention in line with the principles of minimal intervention and retention of the historic fabric as per the SPAB.

As per the above, we will look to partner the top section of the east valley rafter with a section of Class D30 oak to match the existing size, spanning from the ridge to the lower purlin.

To help bring everything together and retain the gables, we will look to install ties between the purlins at the east and west gables. These could be installed as 150x75 timber or stainless-steel straps, depending on what we find after opening up the roof completely.

The southeast purlin needs to have an increased bearing, this can be done with a 200x150x12 Unequal Angle, fixed into the purling and the east gable wall using stainless fixings. However, when the roof is open, we shall look to see if we can create a suitable load path by fixing a timber ledger plate to the internal gable to support the purlin, rather than introducing a new material.

Re-roof as above

2.3 Rebuild the chimney to match period photographs. The chimney stack which has been taken down in the past 40 years, the stack is still in the roof void below the slates.

3. North wing west wall

Removing a section of the inner leaf of masonry as per the previous engineers' comments on the west wall and replacing it in stud. The area of masonry to be removed is constructed on top of an inclined historic oak member. Given the nature of this section of stonework, it would be difficult to just remove an inner leaf. If we can work out a way to keep it in situ we shall as it contributes to the historical interest in the building. However, we will undertake the following as a minimum to help improve the situation;

- Remove modern cement mortared stone masonry above the major rafter.
- Inspect stonework and supporting timberwork.
- Reinstall lath and plaster as existing in the whole section.
- Monitor for movement.

4. Ground Floor Kitchen

As a worst-case scenario installing a 200x200 Class D30 oak post under the first-floor beam, at the location of the scarf joint. A 600x600x300 concrete pad will also be required as a foundation to support the post. We are just exploring with the new engineer as to whether this will be necessary and if not, we shall leave it out.

5. Repointing of stonework:

Removal of any cement-based pointing by arbortech brick and mortar saw and removal by hand tools to not damage the stone. Rake out the joints to 1.5 to 2 times their height in depth with square shoulders to ensure all the cement is out and to ensure new pointing will grip the stone. Repoint using the lime mix below, finish pointing flush with a minimal recess with a brushed finish. Replastering parts of the inside walls.

6. Minor Repairs of front and back door and windows

Reinforcement and replacement of those parts of the window that have decayed preventing the correct functioning of doors and windows. The repairs will be carried out in-situ. Spliced repairs will be carried out by cutting out rotten wood and splicing or scarfing-in timber inserts which are shaped to obtain the maximum strength and to match the existing profiles.

7. Materials:

Lime mortar - The chimney rebuilding and building repointing will be carried out using Hot Mixed Mortar and a quantity of pozzolan could be incorporated to facilitate the setting process.

Stone for chimney – New rough stone to match existing, sample will be provided before work.

commences.

Internal lime plaster – 1 lime binder to 2 sharp aggregate haired for the backing coat. Unhaired for the float coat and 1 lime binder to 1.5-2 fine aggregate for the topcoat, sponged up for lime wash.

Roofing slate – original and, when needed, reclaimed like for like.

8. Team:

Richard Jordan: SPAB heritage roofer

Wayne Kirby: heritage timber frame expert

Steve Murray: heritage hot lime repointing and plastering

Christian Montez: advisor conservation architect

Kevin Gilsenan: Conservation Engineer

Debora Moretti: archaeologist and historian

Appearance

There will be no significant change to the appearance of the listed building as the materials used for the repairs and will be as the existing material or, in the case of the roof cover, the original material, to ensure the character is not lost.

Heritage Impact Assessment

Significance

This section assesses the relative significance of the site and its key significance values.

'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (Historic England – English Heritage, 2008) sets out a range of heritage values that can be used to establish the significance of a building or place. These include evidential value (the physical aspect of a building that yields evidence about its past), historical value (the extent to which a building is associated with or illustrative of historic events or people), aesthetic value (including design, visual, landscape and architectural value) and communal value (include social and commemorative value and local identity). These values may be tangible, for example, the listed building's grade or they may be intangible, for example, the site's association with a past event or group of people. Significance is a concept for measuring the cultural value of a place, using judgement to assess the place and its various aspects in a hierarchy. The established levels of significance are:

- Exceptional – important at national to international levels, reflected in statutory designations, such as Grade I listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments;
- High – important at regional or sometimes a higher level, e.g., Grade II listed buildings;
- Medium – important at a local level, and possibly at a regional level, for example for group value;
- Low – of no more than local value;
- Negative or intrusive features – features which in their present form detract from the value of the site.

Significance of the Merchants House

As a Grade II listed building, the property carries local and regional significance. The heritage values that contribute to the levels of significance have been considered and assessed as follows:

As one of the earliest surviving buildings in the area, the historic and evidential value of the building is derived from the survival of the 17th and early 18th-century fabric.

The layout, internal and external features reveal the original purpose of the building and how it was occupied in the past, as well as how its use has changed over the years.

There is aesthetic and communal value in the built form of the building, contributing to the local identity of Carlinghow and the character of the landscape. The architectural character of the built form provides aesthetic value in its external appearance as the design, construction methods and traditional detailing are of the local vernacular.

The building as a whole is therefore considered to have high significance although some elements of it have greater significance than others, and it is important to be aware of this in order to assess the impact of the repairs on the interrelationships within the building.

The Proposed Repairs and Restorations

The approach adopted has been for minimal intervention to prevent loss or unnecessary harm to the surviving fabric and retain evidential, aesthetic, historical and communal value.

The changes which will affect the external fabric of the building are considered necessary for the survival of the timber-frame structure, the maintenance of the building in a watertight and damp-contained environment and the upgrading of the thermal performance of the building, such as the works to re-roof and insulate the roof, repair of doors and window and restoration of the chimney.

The internal repairs do not affect the significant features depicted in the listing description as no alteration of the internal fabric of the building will take place.

Conclusions

The Merchants House is designated as a Grade II listed building and is considered to be of high significance. The current proposal for sensitive but efficient repairs and restoration will ensure its long-term future as a family home which is comfortable and sustainable to live in and will prevent its structure from falling into disrepair.

Ultimately, the repairs and restoration will have minimal impact on the historic fabric and will improve the appearance and legibility of the historic building.

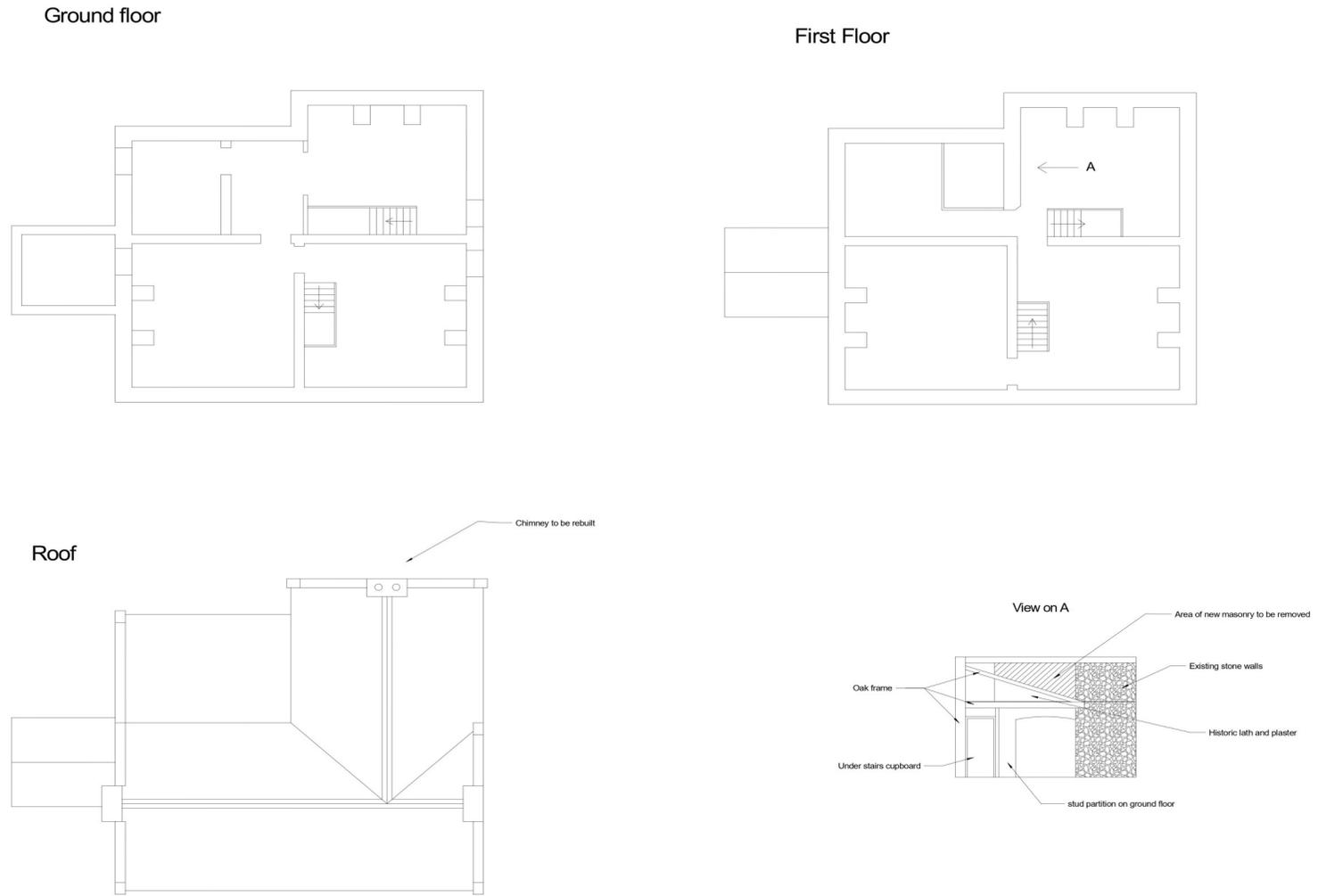


Figure 1



Plate 1. The Merchants House 2005, looking north-west



Plate 2. South elevation, Looking north-east



Plate 3. East elevation, looking west



Plate 4. General view of the fire place in the parlour



Plate 5. Salt-cellar



Plate 6. North elevation, 1963, looking south-east



Plate 7. West elevation and outshut, looking south-



Plate 8. Coat of arm